

# WORCESTER POLYTECHNIC INSTITUTE

## 32<sup>nd</sup> Student Government Association

12<sup>th</sup> Meeting of the Thirty First Undergraduate Student Government

Association To be held in Innovation Studio 203

6:00 p.m. – April 19<sup>th</sup>, 2022

- I. Call to Order
- II. Approval of the Minutes
- III. **Public Comments**
  - A. Senator Levitan shared that we should all attend the Hackathon if the Senate ends before 8 pm, in Kaven 162.
- IV. **Special Orders**
  - A. Senator Jacob was appointed as the new Appropriations Chair.
- V. **President's Report**
  - A. The Board of Trustees Survey was administered to gather student data for President Wilde to bring to the board. She recommends that senators send the report out to friends.
- VI. **Vice President's Report**
  - A. Vice President MacGregor thanked everyone for coming to the retreat who went. It was an excellent way to meet people you have not met before. He announced the ultrafan winners from the event:
    1. Most Spirited: Senator Schroeder
    2. Team Player: Chair Cormier
    3. Other Recipients: Senator Graikos and Senator Link
  - B. Project Presentations are next week at the last senate of the term. Communicate with your chairs about what needs to be done!
- VII. Secretary's Report
  - A. No Report
- VIII. **Treasurer's Report**
  - A. This Week in Financials! Treasurer Muhlenburg shared the requests in the CC Morgan Room tomorrow, 4/20, from 6 - 7:10 PM.
- IX. Parliamentarian's Report
  - A. No Report
- X. **Cluster Reports**
  - A. Student Services Cluster
    1. No Report
  - B. **Internal Services Cluster**
    1. Chair Cormier led an elections Kahoot.
  - C. Financials Cluster
    1. No Report
  - D. Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion
    1. No Report
- XI. Faculty, Institute, and Special Committees
  - A. Senator Levitan asked for any complaints about E-Projects 2.0.
    1. Is it important for students to be able to initiate a project on E-Projects?

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- a) Senator Zeolla thinks it works the way it is.
- 2. Senator Levitan asked if proposing a project on E-Projects would be beneficial.
  - a) Senator Schroeder thinks it is important to be able to discuss with the professors first. Much of E-Projects is outdated since websites are not always up to date.
  - b) Educate the departments on how to better support projects.
- 3. Senator Levitan asked what senators find is the easiest way to communicate to professors.
  - a) Senator Schroeder said it depends on who because many people do not answer. A portal would not solve this because it requires an extra step.
  - b) President Wilde found a lot of the projects are taken before they are even posted. It is especially confusing for double majors.
- B. Slack Senator Levitan or Parliamentarian Gyurcsan with any other ideas.
- C. Senator Schroeder reminded everyone to go to the Hackathon for the MHIT.

XII. Old Business

XIII. New Business

#### **A. S.6 Divest WPI Resolution**

##### **1. Purpose of Resolution**

- a) Divest WPI came to present a new resolution. This will be similar to a funding request, where we go into discussion and a vote. Passing would mean we sign onto the resolution and failing would mean we would not. Sam Hopkins is the current president who recently led a climate fair and a rally. Gabe Espinosa is the current president of the Green Team. The Big 10 conference and the Ivy League student body presidents helped their universities commit to carbon neutrality on campus. 5 out of the 14 universities have divested, and all Ivys have, except for U Penn. Climate change is present and 71% of global emissions are causing climate change. Currently, WPI acknowledges the urgency of the climate crisis, but WPI remains invested in fossil fuels. They are willing to take bids from energy companies to convert to clean energy on campus. As leaders of STEM education, it is our responsibility to progress. WPI's new commitment is the principles for responsible investments. They are looking to incorporate ESG issues into investment analysis and decision-making processes. WPI will reanalyze its current investments. WPI's report is not yet published, and the PRI has not finalized its framework. WPI is not doing well in regards to the PRI from conversations with Mike Horan, the Chief Financial Officer. PRI states that we can divest and not work with fossil fuel companies. These companies are not sustainable with finite resources and contribution to climate change. WPI only has indirect investments in fossil fuels, meaning we have limited control. Thus, we give our money to other investment firms that decide where the money goes. They are looking to incorporate ESGs into WPI's policies and practices, and other people would not manage our investments. On behalf of the

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student body, they ask that WPI makes a change. Currently, 40.43 trillion dollars have been divested and 1,508 institutions are divesting. We have a commitment to the faculty, student body, and Worcester community. We can do better as a university. They have submitted a petition to the city of Worcester to divest. It is in our hands to take the step to combat climate change. They formally ask that WPI makes a public statement, cease all new investments in fossil fuels companies by the next fiscal year, develop a divestment plan by the end of the next fiscal year, implement this divestment plan by FY 2026, and pursue the highest possible ratings on the PRI communicating with SGA and the Green Team. Divestment is no investments direct or indirect in any of the top 200 fossil fuel companies by the size of reserves. No investments in any company that explores for, extracts, processes, refines, or transmits coal, oil, and gas.

Questions:

Chair Cormier asked how their communication with the administration went.

*Answer:* It has only been indirect, and they have sort of been brushed off. They are hoping for more direct communication with SGA on their side.

Treasurer Muhlenburg asked for more information about the Ivy League divestment timeline.

*Answer:* They are currently working on a commitment to divestment, so it is not yet completed. The campaign took 10 years to get through. It takes time for contracts to end professionally.

Senator Schroeder asked if this is focused on solely investments or donations as well?

*Answer:* They are only focused on divestments at the moment because of scholarship and resource contribution.

Discussion:

**Pros:**

We will be a pathway to change if we allow them to get in contact with the administration.

As a STEM institution, we have the responsibility to do what is right for the environment.

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We can follow in the footsteps of other institutions.

There is no harm in passing this.

The administration will stop it if the numbers do not pan out.

We do not have enough context to be able to block them from contacting the administration.

**Cons:**

This will take a lot of time and planning.

WPI does not invest its own money.

Our CFO may not have the power to shift the money in financial institutions.

WPI is not doing well financially, and other institutions with a lot of money and endowments may not be reflective. Playing with our investments could be dangerous.

This is risky since it is so new.

WPI did a presentation about the financial distress that a senator had witnessed.

**Points of Information**

Professor Strauss will be working on a similar resolution come for the faculty.

Approving this will not make any guarantees, just provide more connection to the administration.

**Vote**

**Outcome:** Passes

XIV. Questions, Comments, and Ideas

A. All photos taken this year are on the SGA Tech Sync page.

XV. Announcements

A. The SGA Meet and Greet is this Thursday, so get your posters done and sign up for time slots.

B. Sign up for Alpha Phifa this Sunday.

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- C. Go to the Hackathon.
  - D. Come to the SASA Holi event on Sunday.
  - E. Go to Big Show!!!
- XVI. Advisor's Remarks
- A. Go to the Hackathon!
  - B. Advisor Sharry thanked everyone for a great retreat.
  - C. She reminded senators to take time for self-care during finals. There will be some destressing activities next week including massage therapists.
- XVII. President's Remarks**
- A. President Wilde thanked everyone who came to retreat and for all of Vice President MacGregor's attribution.
  - B. Events:
    - 1. Go to Soccoms Quad Fest this week.
    - 2. Buy your Big Show tickets.
    - 3. There is Friday night gaming with the sci-fi society this weekend.
    - 4. SAO is having a community service day Saturday from 8 am-3 pm.
    - 5. SGA Meet and Greet is Thursday!
- XVIII. Adjournment

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